

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 LAB-04 SIL-01 USIA-15 /055 W
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R 311250Z OCT 75
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BTIO, EGEN, GW

SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL OFFICERS' CONFERENCE AND CCAG
MEETING, OCTOBER 21-22, L975

1. SUMMARY: E/C OFFICERS FROM ALL GERMAN POSTS, STATE, AND COMMERCE PARTICIPATED IN COMMERCIAL OFFICERS' CONFERENCE IN BERLIN ON OCTOBER 21 AND 22. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND OPENED THE CONFERENCE AND PRESIDED OVER THE SESSION IN WHICH THE FRG CCAG APPROVED FIRST QUARTER CCP RESULTS. UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR, SELECTED PARTICIPANTS ADDRESSED THE GROUP ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS: THE VIEW FROM WASHINGTON; MARKET RESEARCH; TOP; ECONOMIC REPORTING; BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE, ADS AND OTHER SERVICES; AND TRADE CENTER AND FAIR PROGRAM. WORKSHOPS WERE HELD COVERING "TC AND FAIR SUPPORT" AND "SPRECHTAGE". BASED ON THE ENSUING DISCUSSIONS, SOME COUNTRYWIDE POLICY AND PROCEDURAL CHANGES WERE ESTABLISHED AND WASHINGTON REPS WERE REQUESTED TO INVESTIGATE A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS. END SUMMARY.

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2. OVER 20 OFFICERS PARTICIPATED FULLY IN THE ONE AND ONE-HALF DAY MEETING, INCLUDING THE COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR (MODERATOR), 2 E/C OFFICERS FROM EACH GERMAN POST EXCEPT FOR BREMEN (1), STATE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES FROM EUR/CE AND EB/OCA/CM AND A COMMERCE DEPT. REPRESENTATIVE FROM OIM. THE AMBASSADOR, THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS, AND THE COUNSELOR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS ALSO TOOK TIME OFF FROM THE CONCURRENT FRG PRINCIPAL OFFICERS' CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS THE COMMERCIAL CONFERENCE.

3. AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND OPENED THE CONFERENCE BY EMPHASIZING THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC AND TRADE TOPICS TO RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FRG. WITH RESPECT TO TRADE PROMOTION, HE NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THAT THE US TRADE BALANCE WITH THE FRG HAD MOVED INTO A SURPLUS POSITION FOR 1975 TO DATE, BUT URGED THE ASSEMBLED OFFICERS TO KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK AND NOT TO BE TEMPTED TO REST ON THEIR LAURELS. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO HOSTED A COCKTAIL-BUFFET ON THE EVENING OF THE 20TH FOR THE PARTICIPANTS IN BOTH THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS' AND THE COMMERCIAL OFFICERS' CONFERENCES.

4. THE FIRST ITEM OF REGULAR BUSINESS WAS TO CONVENE THE GROUP AS THE CCAG IN ORDER TO DISCUSS THE FIRST QUARTER CCP PROGRESS REPORT. THE REPORT ITSELF (BONN 16868) WAS REVIEWED AND DISCUSSED. THE COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMPLIMENT THE PERSONNEL FROM THE POSTS FOR THEIR SUCCESS IN EXCEEDING VIRTUALLY ALL FIRST QUARTER CCP GOALS DESPITE THE RECESSION AND THE NORMAL SUMMER BUSINESS SLOWDOWN IN THE FRG. WITH AMBASSADOR HILLENBRAND PRESIDING, THE CCAG APPROVED THE REPORT AS WRITTEN. THIS ACTION WAS FOLLOWED BY BRIEF DISCUSSIONS OF THE BUDGET SITUATION AND OF THE USIS ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE COMMERCIAL PROGRAM. EMBREPS EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCURATE REPORTING OF COMMERCIAL EXPENDITURES BY THE POSTS IN ORDER TO SPEED THE EVOLUTION TOWARD A TRUE COMMERCIAL BUDGET. FINALLY, THE WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESENT (TWO OF WHOM NORMALLY SIT ON THE WCAG) DESCRIBED THE FUNCTIONS OF AND THE MEETING FORMAT EMPLOYED BY THE WCAG.

5. DURING THE NEXT SESSION, THE WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVES WERE ASKED TO EXPLAIN IN DETAIL THE OPERATIONS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OFFICES AND TO DESCRIBE THE PROCESS WHEREBY THE INTERESTS OF WASHINGTON ENDUSERS

WERE RECONCILED AND PRESENTED TO POLICY LEVELS IN
STATE AND COMMERCE FOR APPROVAL IN THE FORM OF THE
CCP. THEY REPORTED THAT, AFTER A HARD BATTLE, BOTH
DEPARTMENTS SEEMED TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN JUSTIFYING

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ADEQUATE COMMERCIAL FUNDING FOR FY 76. HOWEVER, THE
WASHINGTON PARTICIPANTS EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR FORMAL
PLANNING AND EXECUTION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CCP
IN ORDER TO AVOID BUDGETARY CUTBACKS -- ESPECIALLY
WITH RESPECT TO THE COMMERCIAL EXHIBITIONS PROGRAM --
IN FUTURE YEARS.

6. MARKET RESEARCH WAS THE TOPIC OF THE NEXT SESSION.
EMBREPS NOTED THAT A CERTAIN MINIMUM LEVEL OF
INTERNAL MARKET RESEARCH WAS NOT ONLY A BONA FIDE BUT
A NECESSARY INGREDIENT OF THE OVERALL TRADE PROMOTION
PROGRAM, EVEN WHEN IT CONSUMES OFFICER TIME THAT MIGHT
OTHERWISE BE DEVOTED TO "QUANTIFIABLE" ACTIVITIES.
USING THE RECENT "BEST PROSPECTS" REPORT (BONN A-398)

AS AN EXAMPLE, IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT THESE DATA ARE USEFUL IN DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS AND IN THE SELECTION OF CAMPAIGNS FOR THE FY 77 CCP. THE IMPORTANCE OF USING CONSISTENT PRODUCT DEFINITIONS FOR TARGET INDUSTRY STATISTICAL REPORTING, BASED ON THE USDOC PRINTOUT "U.S. EXPORTS BY TARGET INDUSTRY", WAS ALSO UNCLASSIFIED

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STRESSED. POSTS WITH INDUSTRY/COMMODITY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RESPECTIVE TARGET INDUSTRIES WERE DIRECTED TO CORRELATE THE SCHEDULE B PRODUCT CATEGORY CODE FROM AID PRINTOUT WITH THE CORRESPONDING GERMAN BTN COMMODITY CODES SO AS TO FACILITATE PROMPT REPORTING ON TARGET INDUSTRIES UPON REQUEST AND WITHIN DEADLINES. POSTS WERE ALSO URGED TO IDENTIFY AND REPORT ON "TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY" FOR POSSIBLE INCORPORATION INTO THE CCP AS AMENDMENTS. IN THIS CONNECTION, SEVERAL POST PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDED STANDARDIZATION OF PRODUCT CATEGORIES REQUIRED FOR TARGET INDUSTRY REPORTING AND FOR CERTAIN CERP "INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK REPORTS" COVERING THE SAME GENERAL FIELDS. SUCH STANDARDIZATION WOULD ELIMINATE CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION AND WORK DUPLICATION AT THE POSTS.

7. A WIDE-RANGING AND SPIRITED DISCUSSION OF THE TRADE OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM PRODUCED FEW CONCLUSIONS BUT MANY QUESTIONS FOR COMMERCE. ALL PARTICIPANTS AGREED THAT THE TOP IS AN EXCELLENT CONCEPT WITH OUTSTANDING POTENTIAL IN THE FRG (NOTE FIRST QUARTER RESULTS). HOWEVER, THEY BELIEVE THAT THE SYSTEM CAN BE IMPROVED SO AS TO BETTER SERVE BOTH THE US SUBSCRIBER AND THE GERMAN INQUIRER, TO CUT DOWN ON THE PAPER WORK, AND -- IN VIEW OF THE PROMINENCE OF TO'S AS A QUANTIFIABLE RESULT FOR CCP REPORTING -- TO ARRIVE AT A WORLDWIDE STANDARD FOR COUNTING THE RESULTS. AS A STANDARD PROCEDURE, GERMAN POSTS SUBMIT SEPARATE TO CABLES ON ANY GERMAN FIRM WHICH INQUIRES ABOUT DISPARATE PRODUCT LINES (DEFINED AS THOSE HAVING DIFFERENT 4-DIGIT SIC NUMBERS). THIS TACTIC WAS DEVISED TO BETTER TARGET DISTRIBUTION TO US FIRMS, THUS ENCOURAGING ADEQUATE AND PERSONALIZED RESPONSES TO THE GERMAN FIRM. POSTS EARLIER EXPERIENCED GOOD RESULTS WITH THIS TECHNIQUE (SEE, E.G., "TRADE OPPORTUNITY FOLLOW-UP REPORT", DUESSELDORF A-104 OF JULY 11, 1975), BUT HAVE NOTICED A TENDENCY BY THE TO SECTION IN USDOC TO LUMP THESE MESSAGES TOGETHER ON ONE FORM DIB-412P FOR DISTRIBUTION TO US FIRMS. THE APPARENT RESULT HAS BEEN A DETERIORATION IN THE QUALITY OF RESPONSES FROM US FIRMS AS DEMONSTRATED BY SUBSTANDARD FORM LETTERS, UNCLASSIFIED

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MISINTERPRETATION OF PRODUCT CATEGORIES, ETC. POST PARTICIPANTS ALSO REPORTED AN INCREASE IN THE LENGTH OF TIME BETWEEN TRANSMISSION OF THE POSTS' CABLES AND RECEIPT OF RESPONSES BY GERMAN FIRMS. THEY FURTHER AGREED THAT A PRINTOUT OF TOP SUBSCRIBERS BY SIC NUMBER WOULD BE A VERY USEFUL ADJUNCT TO THEIR TRADE OPPORTUNITY ACTIVITIES. THE USDOC REP AGREED TO REVIEW THESE COMMENTS WITH BIC/TOP AND TO REPORT THE REACTIONS TO EMBASSY BONN.

8. MINISTER CROWLEY NEXT ADDRESSED THE GROUP ON ECONOMIC REPORTING. HE REMINDED THE PARTICIPANTS THAT, IN A COUNTRY AS HIGHLY DEVELOPED AS GERMANY, MUCH ECONOMIC INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN PRINTED FORM. OFFICERS SHOULD BE ALERT TO ANY NEW PUBLICATIONS THAT PROVIDE USEFUL INFORMATION OR ANALYSES AND FORWARD THEM AS A RECOMMENDED CERP PUBLICATION TO EMBASSY BONN. SCHEDULED CERP REPORTS SHOULD RECEIVE MORE PERSONAL ATTENTION FROM AMERICAN OFFICERS RATHER THAN BEING HANDLED EXCLUSIVELY BY SENIOR FSL'S, WHO MAY NOT BE FULLY SENSITIVE TO THE DRASTIC CHANGES IN US ECONOMIC INTERESTS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS; "INDUSTRIAL OUT-LOOK" CERP REPORTS SHOULD CONTAIN A SEPARATE SECTION

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ACTION EB-07

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IN WHICH THE IMPLICATIONS FOR US BUSINESS ARE ANALYZED. BY CONTRAST, CERP ALERT REPORTING DOES NOT LEND ITSELF TO RIGID CRITERIA EITHER AS TO QUANTITY OR CONTENT. THE MAJOR TEST OF USEFULNESS IS WHETHER A PROPOSED CERP ALERT WILL PROVIDE UNIQUE INFORMATION OF INTEREST TO BONN OR WASHINGTON ENDUSERS. THE PERIODIC ECONOMIC ALERT LIST AND THE REPORTING OFFICER'S PERCEPTION OF CURRENT POLICY INTERESTS SHOULD BE THE GUIDES. REPETITIONS OF ACCOUNTS BY MAJOR NEWSPAPERS (UNLESS EMBELLISHED BY INFORMATION FROM PERSONAL CONTACTS) ARE NORMALLY NOT WORTH REPORTING, NOR ARE STATE ("LAND") ECONOMIC AND TRADE DEVELOPMENTS. TOPICS WHICH SHOULD BE REPORTED INCLUDE: DEVELOPMENTS IN MAJOR INDUSTRIES OF POLICY INTEREST (CURRENTLY, IN ADDITION TO CAMPAIGN INDUSTRIES, E.G., NUCLEAR, AUTOMOTIVE, ENERGY, MINERALS); MAJOR GERMAN SALES AND PROJECTS IN THIRD COUNTRIES, INCLUDING CREDIT PROVISIONS; DISCRIMINATION AGAINST US BUSINESS; OPINIONS OF MAJOR BANKERS AND INDUSTRIALISTS ON CURRENT FRG OR US ECONOMIC POLICY, ETC. WASHINGTON REPS REMINDED PARTICIPANTS OF UNCLASSIFIED

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THE APPROVING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSIGNING PROPER "TAGS" ON SUCH REPORTS; IF THE REPORT DOES NOT DISPLAY THE EALR "TAG" AS WELL AS "TAG'S" APPROPRIATE TO THE SUBJECT, IT PROBABLY WILL NOT REACH THE INTERESTED AUDIENCE IN WASHINGTON (EMBASSY COMMENT: NOR IN BONN END COMMENT).

9. IN A SESSION ON THE TRADE CENTER AND TRADE FAIR PROGRAM, THE FRANKFURT TRADE CENTER DIRECTOR PRESENTED THE REVISED FY 76 AND PROPOSED FY 77 EXHIBITION PROGRAMS FOR GERMANY. FOR EACH FY THERE WILL BE OFFICIAL US PARTICIPATION IN THREE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FAIRS; FIVE OF THESE SIX FAIRS WILL BE MANAGED BY THE FTC STAFF, REFLECTING A GRADUAL TREND OF INCREASING EMPHASIS ON MAJOR FAIRS AND DECREASING EMPHASIS ON TRADE CENTER EXHIBITIONS. THE POSTS WERE REQUESTED TO CONTINUE AND WHERE POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE THEIR SUPPORT FOR THIS ENTIRE PROGRAM. IN ORDER TO PROMOTE BETTER

UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROGRAM ON THE PART OF OFFICERS
AT THE OUTLYING POSTS, EMBREPS URGED THE RESPECTIVE
E/C CHIEFS OF SECTION TO FUND THE TRAVEL OF ALL AMERICAN
OFFICERS AND SENIOR FSL'S TO AT LEAST ONE US TRADE
EVENT PER YEAR -- PREFERABLY ONE IN A FIELD OF
IMPORTANCE TO THAT CONSULAR DISTRICT. DURING THE
SUCCEEDING WORKSHOP ON TC PROMOTION TECHNIQUES, THE
TCD AND THE POSTS AGREED TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS
TO STIMULATE ATTENDANCE: (A) INCREASED USE OF TELEX
FOR FOLLOW-UP ON KPC'S; (B) ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE
"MULTI KPC" SEMINARS AT THE CONSULATES WITH THE
ASSISTANCE OF A TECHNICAL EXPERT RECRUITED BY THE FTC;
(C) HAVE ALL KPC'S FOR ONE OF THE UPCOMING SHOWS MADE
BY AMERICAN OFFICERS IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER THIS
TECHNIQUE IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN HAVING FSL'S MAKE THE
CALLS; (D) COMMIT THE TC TO PROVIDING KPC LISTS AND
PRODUCT LITERATURE TO THE POSTS AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS
PRIOR TO SHOW OPENING. POSTS WERE ALSO REMINDED THAT
THE CCP ESTABLISHES GOALS FOR BSP'S IN CAMPAIGN AREAS
AND THAT ALL POSTS SHOULD PROMOTE THIS PROGRAM AT
EVERY OPPORTUNITY. THE TRADE CENTER DIRECTOR POINTED
OUT THAT THE PROGRAM IS CURRENTLY PROGRESSING WELL,
WITH BSP'S FIRMLY SCHEDULED FOR PRACTICALLY EVERY OPEN
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DATE AT THE TC BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF THE CALENDAR
YEAR.

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

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USMISSION USBERLIN
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10. THE LAST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE WAS A WORKSHOP ON THE "SPRECHTAG" TECHNIQUE. EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES REPORTED THAT THE RECORDS SHOW THAT 18 "SPRECHTAGE" WERE HELD IN FY 75 AND 17 HAVE ALREADY BEEN SCHEDULED FOR FY 76. OFFICERS FROM THE VARIOUS POSTS EXPERIENCED IN MOUNTING THESE EVENTS EXCHANGED VIEWS ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS. THE FOLLOWING FACTORS WERE CITED AS OBJECTIVES OF "SPRECHTAGE": (A) PRODUCTION OF TO'S, REVERSE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES, ETC.; (B) DEVELOPING NEW CONTACTS THROUGHOUT THE CONSULAR DISTRICT; (C) SUPPORTING STATE DEVELOPMENT OFFICES; (D) PROMOTING SPECIFIC CCP CAMPAIGNS; AND (E) IMPROVING STAFF MORALE. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN SITE SELECTION INCLUDE: (A) AVAILABILITY OF A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BANK, OR OTHER WILLING CO-SPONSOR; (B) EVEN GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF THE DISTRICT; (C) INDUSTRIAL POTENTIAL OF THE SELECTED CITY AND ITS SURROUNDING DISTRICT, ESPECIALLY IN CCP CAMPAIGN AREAS. A VARIETY OF TECHNIQUES OF ELICITING COOPERATION AND ENTHUSIASM OF UNCLASSIFIED

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SPONSORS AND FOR ACTUAL CONDUCT OF THE INTERVIEWS WERE DISCUSSED. EVEN SOME OF THE POSTS WHICH HAD BEEN MOST SUCCESSFUL WITH THE TECHNIQUE CAUTIONED THAT IT WAS NOT A PANACEA TO BE PROMOTED INDISCRIMINATELY. THE COST/BENEFIT RATIO SHOULD ALWAYS BE KEPT IN MIND AND THE FEASIBILITY OF INDIVIDUAL CALLS TO COVER PROSPECTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AN ALTERNATIVE FOR SMALLER CITIES. INTANGIBLES, SUCH AS THE INSTITUTIONAL PR VALUE FOR THE CONSULATE GENERAL AND THE US GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL MUST ALSO BE WEIGHED. WHILE SOME OF THE SMALLER CONSULAR DISTRICTS MAY EVENTUALLY RUN OUT OF ATTRACTIVE SITES FOR "SPRECHTAGE", THE LARGER DISTRICTS WILL PROBABLY HAVE A PERPETUAL SUPPLY OF SITES ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT "SPRECHTAGE" IN A GIVEN CITY CAN BE REPEATED AT INTERVALS OF 18 TO 24 MONTHS WITHOUT LOSS

IN EFFECTIVENESS.

11. THE NEXT FRG COMMERCIAL OFFICERS' CONFERENCE IS
TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR LATE MARCH 1976 IN FRANKFURT.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

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